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# FOOD FACILITIES FOR TOURISTS- A CASE STUDY OF SSST SHIRDI

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**Abstract:**-Shirdi is an international religious tourist center and thousands of tourists visit to Shirdi Sai baba temple daily. The sansthan has a prasadalaya where it offers food to the tourist at subsidized rates. Thousand of devotees take food from prasadalaya at the nominal rate. All this food prepared with the help of solar steam cooking system. Among the renewable resources of energy solar energy offers a practical solution for the energy problem which is clouding the prospect of mankind. So SSST(Shri Sai Baba Sansthan Trust) Shirdi used the solar energy for preparing the food for thousand of devotees and save conventional energy. This solar system helps SSSTS to save 74 metric tonne LPG gas worth Rs. 29.80 lakh annually. Appreciating and encouraging the efforts of using alternative energy in Shirdi City, the Union Ministry of New & Renewable Energy Government of India, on 13th Mar`2012, awarded Shirdi the status of "SOLAR CITY".

**Keywords:** solar, solar city, steam, prasadalaya, food, tourist, meal,

## INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the most important and fast growing industries in Maharashtra. Tourism represents the largest segment of international trade and earning. There are some countries and state whose economy is totally depends upon tourism. The religious, socio- cultural, historical, educational, geographical factors affecting the tourism all over the world. India is the paradise of tourism. Shirdi is the famous tourist center in the world. Thousands of tourist visits to Shirdi. The SSST Shirdi provides meals to the tourist in very heap. In the prasadalaya of sansthan solar steam cooking system is used for preparing of food.

## OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of the present study are

1) To study the solar steam cooking system in SSST Shirdi.
2) To study the arrangement of prasadalaya in SSST Shirdi.
3) To understand the cooking management in prasadalaya.
4) To find out the saving of fuel by using solar energy.

## STUDY AREA

Shirdi town is situated in Rahata Tahasil in Ahmednagar District of Maharashtra State (India). It is located at 19o45' North Latitude and 74o25' East Longitude.It is on Ahmednagar-Manmad State Highway No.10 at 83 Km. from Ahmednagar, and 15 Km. from Kopargaon district and approximately 70 Km. from Nashik. The nearest Airports are at Mumbai, Pune and Aurangabad. Nearest station is Kopargaon..

## METHODOLOGY

The present study based on both primary and secondary sources of data. The primary data collected by visiting SSSTS's (Shri Saibaba Sansthan Trust Shirdi) prasadsalaya.The secondary data collected through newspapers, SSSTS, Shirdi Nagar Panchayat, annual reports of Shirdi sansthan.

## SOLAR STEAM COOKING SYSTEM

In Shirdi thousands of devotees visit every day. The Shri Saibaba Sansthan Trust Shirdi (SSSTS) provide food facility in very normal rate. The steam for cooking at SSSTS was being generated by LPG gas firing in the boiler. The kitchen consumes 555 tones gas every year for food and laddoo preparation. To cut down fuel expenditure and to check pollution from the kitchen SSSTS installed the gigantic solar system at a cost of Rs.1.33 crore. This system has been designed in such a way that will generate steam for cooking. In this system 73 parabolic concentrators called as Scheffler dishes placed on the terrace of Sai Prasad Building No.2.The concentrators create temperatures of 550-650 degrees Celsius by focusing sun's rays. The intense heat generated at the focal point of each dish is used to convert water into steam which is piped to feed the steam cooking vessels in the kitchen. Above the receiver is an insulated header pipe filled half with water. The cold water enters the receiver through inner pipe, gets heated due to the high temperature of the concentrated rays and the heated water goes up. The cold water again enters through inner pipe and the cycle continues till steam is generated. The steam gets stored in the upper half empty portion of the header pipe and pressure keeps on rising. Then the steam sent to kitchen through insulated pipe line. This system generates about 3500kg of steam everyday which is sufficient to cook food for about 20000 people. The only manual inputs needed by the system are setting the concentrators to face the sun in the morning and operating the pump to fill the pipes with water. A timer mechanism powered by solar cells (which convert sunlight into electricity) gradually rotates the dishes so that they constantly face the sun as it moves across the sky.

This solar system helps SSSTS to save 74 metric tonne LPG gas worth Rs. 29.80 lakh annually. Appreciating and encouraging the efforts of using alternative energy in Shirdi City, the Union Ministry of New & Renewable Energy Government of India, on 13th Mar`2012, awarded Shirdi the status of “SOLAR CITY”.

Prasadalaya

Thousands of tourist visit to shirdi everyday. SSST build a biggest prasadalaya only 700m from the main Sai Baba temple. This prasadalaya construct on 7.5 acers of the land and has built up area of 183000 sq. feet. A gigantic dining hall of 44567sq. feet has been built on the ground floor. In this hall 3500 tourist can have Prasad-meals at a time. Two additional halls have been built on the first floor. The capacity of this is 1000 tourist at one time. Another 20240 sq. feet hall has been constructed for V.I.P. where 300 hundred V.I.P. tourist can have meals. For pilgrims who cannot afford to pay, there is another Annadan hall which has a capacity of 250 bhikshus and the trust serves food for free.

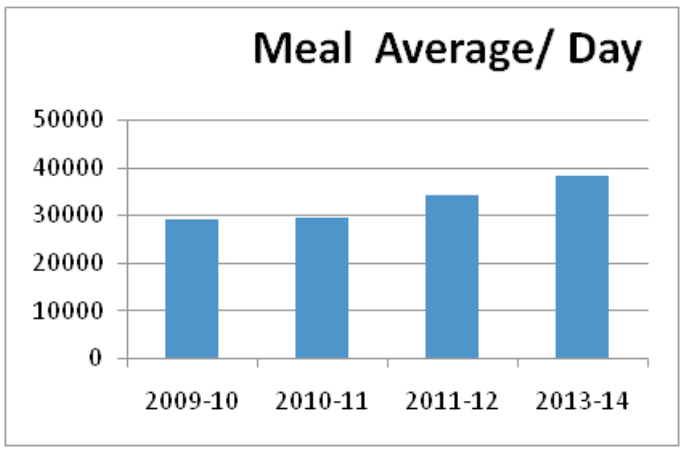
The prasadalaya serve simple Maharashtra food comprising dal, rice, chapatti, two vegetables and a sweet. The prasadalaya is open from 10am to 10pm and serves meals 30000 to 35000 people every day. During the holidays and festival period this figure goes up to 100000 people. The charges of Rs. 10 per meal for adult and Rs. 5 for children below the age of 10.For the arrangement of pure drinking water to tourist R.O. Plant having capacity of 2500 liter/hour is implemented.

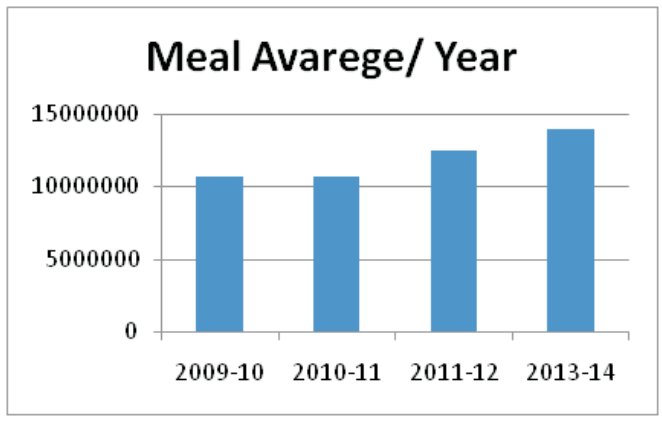
**Meal taken by pilgrims (2009 to 2013)**

| Year | Average/ Year | Average/ Day |
|---|---|---|
| April 2009 to March2010 | 10617461 | 29089 |
| April 2010 to March2011 | 10691423 | 29291 |
| April 2011 to March2012 | 12436706 | 34073 |
| April 2012 to March2013 | 13925341 | 38152 |

**Table no. 1 (Source- SSST Shirdi Annual report 2012-13)**

Table no.1 shows the number of pilgrims who had taken the meal from 2009 to 2013. Every year the number of pilgrims is increased. In 2009-10 the average number of pilgrims who has taken the meal is10617461 and in 2012-13 is 13925341 pilgrims per year. And 29089 pilgrims take meals in 2009-10 and 38152 in 2012-13 average per day.




**COOKING MANAGEMENT AND MACHINERIES**

The cooking management in the prasadalaya is very systematic. There are three kitchen halls at the ground floor. First kitchen hall is used for cooking rice and vegetables. Second kitchen hall is used for making the breakfast pockets. And third one is used for Ladoos and Bundi. The kitchen hall at the second floor is used for making chapattis.

There are two imported machines are used for cutting vegetables. To wash the rice, vegetables and legume's three imported machines are used in the kitchen. Steam cooker is used for cooking rice. Readymade material likes spices, coriander powder, turmeric, flour are not used in the kitchen. There are grinding machines and flour mill used for raw material. For vegetables and dry foods there is cold storage facility in the prasadalaya. Two imported automated dish washing machines are used for cleaning dishes after tourist's meal. For onion and garlic peeler machines are used and butter mixer, thermic fluid heating system, R.O. plant, hydraulic trolleys are also used in the prasadalaya. The steam cooking system in prasadalaya is found very clean, efficient and hygienic.

**Total Sale of food items**

| Food Items | Rate | 2009-10 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ladoo | Rs.10/Pocket | 12433070 Pockets | 17524176 pockets | 18876469 Pockets |
| Breakfast | Rs.3/Pocket | 1590828 Pockets | 1789025 Pockets | 2025594 Pockets |
| Tea | Rs.1/Cup | 7841945 Cup | 9128919 Cup | 9461400 Cup |
| Coffee | Rs.1.50/Cup | 1915554 Cup | 1935214 Cup | 1955220 Cup |
| Milk | Rs.1.50/Cup | 1216646 Cup | 1558220 Cup | 1784203 Cup |

**Table no.2 (Source- SSST Shirdi Annual report 2012-13)**

Table no.2 shows the total sale of food items like ladoos, tea, coffee, breakfast and milk from 2009 to 2012. The total sale of 50 gm ladoo is 12433070 pockets in 2009-10 and 18876469 pockets in 2011-12. Like ladoos pocket the sale of breakfast is also increase every year. The total sale of cup of tea, coffee and milk is also increased every year.

## CONCLUSION

1)Steam cooking has been found to be very clean, efficient and hygienic way of cooking.
2)This is largest solar system in world.
3)This is environmentally free solar steam cooking system.
4)Every day and year the total number of tourist who has taken the meal are increased.
5)The sale of other food items is also increased every day.
6)Thousands of tourists take meals every day.
7)The rate of meal is very cheap.

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